

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CU-04 AID-05 IO-10 /069 W

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O R 271330Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4232

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

UNCLAS SAIGON 3637

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJ: TECHNICAL SCHOOL STUDENTS PROTEST DRAFT

DEPT PASS IMMEDIATE IBS/NCA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. STUDENTS AT CAO THANG TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL IN DOWNTOWN SAIGON DEMONSTRATED AGAINST NEW DRAFT RULES FOR SECOND DAY IN A ROW.

ACCORDING TO POLICE REPORTS, TWO HUNDRED STRIKING STUDENTS YESTERDAY RETURNED PEACEFULLY TO CLASSES AFTER MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS CAME TO ACCEPT THEIR PROTEST PETITION. THIS MORNING THREE HUNDRED STRIKING STUDENTS REPORTEDLY RETURNED TO CLASS AFTER APPEAL BY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. ANOTHER 100, HOWEVER, REMAINED IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL AND BLOCKED OFF NEARBY INTERSECTION AS THEY CONTINUED PROTEST.

2. REPORTEDLY, FIVE POLICEMEN WERE INJURED BY STUDENTS THROWING ROCKS AND MOLOTOV COCKTAILS, BUT POLICE DID NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS DEMONSTRATION. MOST OF STUDENTS DISPER-

SED BY NOON, WITH ONLY TWO REPORTED ARRESTS. SMALL GROUP OF STUDENTS THIS AFTERNOON CARRIED BANNERS APPEALING FOR RELEASE OF THEIR COMRADES AND FOR A ONE YEAR EXTENSION IN DRAFT DEFERMENT FOR TECHNICAL STUDENTS. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCED SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED FOR FIVE DAYS STARTING MARCH 28.

3. COMMENT: UNDER NEW DRAFT RULES, TECHNICAL SCHOOL STUDENTS 19 YEARS AND OLDER (OTHER THAN THOSE IN THE LAST YEAR OF THEIR PROGRAM) ARE TO BE DRAFTED FROM APRIL 1-15. CAO THANG STUDENTS, WHO ARE ONLY OPEN DEMONSTRATORS SO FAR, OBVIOUSLY MOTIVATED IN PART BY IMMEDIATE SELF INTEREST. HOWEVER, THEY ALSO REFLECT WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT THE DRAFT, EVEN AS AMENDED, IS INEQUITABLE. SAIGON ARCHBISHOP NGUYEN VAN BINH TOLD EMBOFF RECENTLY THAT ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE WANT IS FOR THE MOBILIZATION LAWS TO BE APPLIED WITH JUSTICE. IN THIS REGARD, HE SPECIFICALLY CITED BLOATED HEADQUARTERS STAFF AND "OVERSEAS STUDENTS" WHO ARE PROTECTED BY POWERFUL PATRONS. ALTHOUGH THE ARCHBISHOP DID NOT EXPLICITLY BACK THOSE PROTESTING NEW MOBILIZATION RULES, HE SEEMED IN SYMPATHY WITH THEM. AND THERE ARE SOME OTHERS WHO SHARE HIS VIEWS.
LEHMANN

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